

Mr. Phil Isenberg
Chair, MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force
Resources Agency
1416 Ninth St., Suite 1311
Sacramento, Ca 95814

14 February 2005

Dear Mr. Isenberg,

I am writing to share some thoughts on the subject of the MLPA, but first let me establish my credentials. I am a retired Navy Captain and while in the Navy I was given 5 years of graduate education in the fields of oceanography and meteorology. After my retirement from the Navy I had a second career with the United Nations in Geneva. After retiring from the U.N. I had a third career with the National Ocean Service as the Chief of an NOS office in Monterey. I was the senior NOS person in Monterey at the time the Monterey Bay National Sanctuary was established and was involved in that process. After retiring from NOAA I taught ocean science and ocean policy at the California State University Monterey Bay for 7 years. I am now fully retired except for volunteer work including service as a guide at the Monterey Bay Aquarium. I strongly support the goals of the MLPA. I should also mention that I am a native of California and a long time resident of the central coast.

For a long time it has been obvious that the citizens of California are interested and concerned about our coastal ocean and marine resources and want them protected. It is also clear that the CDFG has not done a great job in providing that protection. There have been other attempts before the MLPA and each time they have failed as well as two abortive attempts to proceed with the MLPA. Whatever plan the Blue Ribbon Task Force comes up I urge you to incorporate safeguards to insure that the CDFG goes forward with the spirit as well as the letter of the law. I also urge you to remember the old adage "best is the enemy of better". Too often opponents of programs, such as the MLPA, try to delay action with arguments that the plan is not perfect or more data is needed, etc. I feel you need to reject those arguments and move forward. It is always possible and even preferable to make changes after a program, such as a network of Marine Reserves, is in place.

As you prepare your plan of action I suggest you keep two guiding principles of conservation in mind. The first is to take an ecosystem approach rather than focusing on a particular animal. The second is the principle of precautionary action. That means it is better to be safe than sorry. With regard to Marine Reserves that means more protection rather than less.

One of your goals involves cooperation with the Federal government. I suggest you focus on the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. You should formally invite the MBNMS to join with you by extending the Marine Reserves, created

under the MLPA, into Federal waters. You might also consider defining the term "central coast" to mean the state waters within the MBNMS.

I have several ideas regarding funding for you to consider. The first would be to have the State earmark license fees from both sports and commercial fisheries to the operation of the MLPA Marine Reserves. This funding should be written into law and not left to the whims of the CDFG. The second would be to designate one or more marine research facilities in California as the "official" MLPA research coordinators. Then request both Federal and State government agencies that fund research to give priority for grants for MLPA research submitted and/or endorsed by the official MLPA research coordinators. Research coordination should be done by independent and experienced researchers and not by the CDFG. My third suggestion for funding would be to solicit private sponsorship of specific Marine Reserves. Private companies, conservation groups, foundations and even private individuals might want to sponsor or help sponsor a Marine Reserve.

I hope you find these suggestions helpful. If you or one of your staff would like to discuss the ideas in more depth please feel free to contact me. My phone number is 831 484-9058 and the e-mail is w_schramm@comcast.net.

Sincerely,

William Schramm